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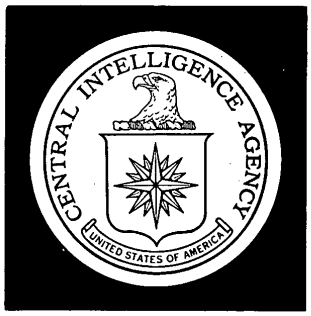

The President's Daily Brief

21 July 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

21 July 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Recent developments in Cambodia are discussed on *Page 1.*

In Laos, combat activity has increased in several scattered areas. *(Page 2)*

North Vietnam *(Page 3)* 50X1

The Libyans have received their first delivery of Soviet combat equipment. *(Page 4)*

East German leader Ulbricht has linked a third East German - West German summit meeting with the successful conclusion of a nonaggression pact between Bonn and Moscow. *(Page 5)*

Yesterday Israeli planes flew reconnaissance missions over SAM sites in the UAR in what may be a prelude to another air attack against the sites. *(Page 6)*

China North Vietnam *(Page 6)* 50X1

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Cambodia: Current Situation

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CAMBODIA

Communist forces continue to be active in Kompong Chhnang Province. Kompong Chhnang city was harassed by enemy fire on 19 July, and on the same day a government position north of the city on the Tonle Sap was overrun by a large Communist force. [redacted] some 2,000-3,000 North Vietnamese troops passing through a rubber plantation east of Kompong Chhnang city between 12-14 July. At the time, the troops appeared exhausted but well equipped. They probably came from the Kompong Thom area where fighting has eased in recent weeks. The government has sent two Khmer Krom battalions to strengthen defenses at Kompong Chhnang. 50X1

To the east, in Kompong Cham Province, the Communists launched a mortar attack on Tonle Bet on 19 July. The headquarters of the 9th Viet Cong Division has moved to within seven miles northeast of Kompong Cham city.

In the south, the district administration center at Srang in Kompong Speu Province, 30 miles southwest of Phnom Penh, was overrun by the Communists on 19 July. Fighting continues in this area and late press reports indicate that government forces have recaptured Srang. [redacted] 50X1

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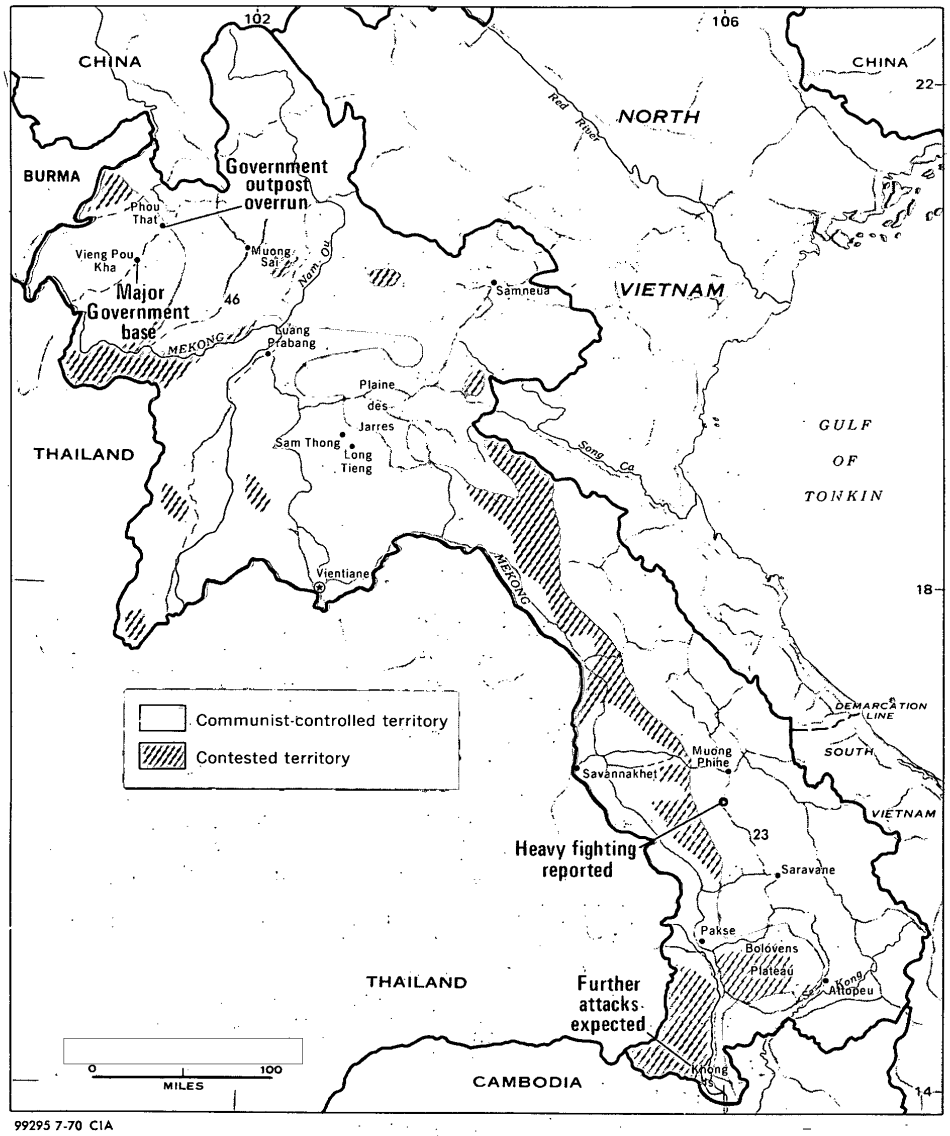
Laos: Current Situation



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LAOS

The level of fighting has increased at several scattered locations throughout the country in recent days. In the far northwest, two Pathet Lao companies overran a government outpost at Phou That.

> *This outpost had provided outlying protection for a major government base at Vieng Pou Kha, one of the principal government sites near the Chinese roadbuilders along Route 46. Combat activity in the area is rare.*

North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops, following recent raids along the west bank of the Mekong, mounted a battalion-sized attack on government positions to the east of Khong Island on 18 July. The enemy assault was repulsed, but enemy propaganda statements suggest the Communists will try again.

> *The government has flown in reinforcements for the Khong Island garrison, but it is doubtful that they will be effective if the Communists choose to employ the four-battalion force they are believed to maintain in the immediate area.*

Elsewhere in the panhandle, three irregular battalions involved in the government's effort to harass the Communists' Route 23 supply line south of Muong Phine were forced to break contact with the enemy on 18 July after two days of fighting. Enemy casualties were substantial, however, and significant quantities of ammunition, weapons, food, and documents were reported captured or destroyed.

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USSR - NORTH VIETNAM

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USSR-LIBYA

A Soviet freighter offloaded military equipment--including 32 T-54/55 medium tanks and 18 armored scout cars--in Tripoli on 18 July. A second Soviet arms carrier was awaiting berthing space in the harbor at the time.

This is Russia's first delivery of combat equipment to Libya, although the Libyans have previously received some Soviet arms from the UAR. Moscow has been anxious to enlist Libya as an arms client ever since the coup in September 1969. Benghazi may have turned to the Soviets for ground forces equipment following London's refusal in April to sell the Chieftain tank. Egyptian pressure to standardize Libyan arms was probably another factor in Libya's looking to Moscow as the supplier.

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EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY

Party chief Ulbricht reiterated East Germany's willingness to participate in a third summit meeting in a conciliatory speech last Friday. He indicated the meeting could convene as soon as Bonn signs the nonaggression pact under negotiation with Moscow. Noting Christian Democratic opposition to Ostpolitik, Ulbricht implied that Pankow might be willing to compromise on some points but not on basic issues. He again stressed, for example, that the talks should lead to diplomatic relations between the two Germanies.

Ulbricht's remarks indicate he is well briefed on the progress of Bonn's talks with Moscow and Warsaw, and does not wish to give the impression that his regime is a stumbling block to Brandt's efforts at normalizing relations with the East.

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NOTES

Israel-UAR: Israeli planes reconnoitered new concentrations of surface-to-air missile sites in Egypt yesterday, drawing fire from both SA-2's and SA-3's. The mission may presage a second strike at the sites today.

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North Vietnam - Communist China

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